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dicate that they have recently taken part in a certain type of Maki rite, or that they have secretly carried out a certain act of sorcery against persons unknown—a cheap type of self-advertisement apt, however, to be imitated by those only wishing to gain a reputation for occult power; or an old man may by similar means demonstrate to an admiring world the fact that he has sacrificed more than one home-bred circle-tusker.[1]

Forms of greeting.

Before reaching the village the average native knows from footprints who has already returned, for each man's footprints are known. In the case of a woman, it is more than likely that he knows also, from the impress of her foot, what load she has been carrying.

Meeting an individual or a party on the path, there is little need to speculate whither they come, for the polite formula of greeting is, "Where have you come from?" or "Where are you going?" Nor, under ordinary circumstances, will the question be evaded, since not only is it the custom to tell, but it would also be futile to conceal, since so many indications, as well as the publicity under which all members of the community live, make checking up on any individual's whereabouts easy. Gossip, too, spreads quickly and surely, and only sorcerers and adulterers have real need to conceal their movements.

Fire-making.

Once home, the first concern is the cooking of the evening meal, the most important in the day, since breakfast consists usually of bits left over from the night before, and the midday meal is made of yams roasted over an open fire close to the gardens where they work. Each house has in it an earth-oven, a simple hole dug in the ground. In this a fire burns all night, for warmth and to keep off stray ghosts. It also serves to keep away mosquitoes. Strong eyes are needed to resist the pungent, ubiquitous smoke whose only exit is through the interstices of the rain-proof thatched roof.

Fires rarely go out, since embers are carefully preserved. When new fire is needed, however, either at home or always when abroad, it must be made by the "plough" method. A flat soft-wood board is placed on the ground, and the fire-maker keeps this in place by kneeling on the nearer end, while, with a hard-wood stick about eight inches long gripped in both hands, he rubs backwards and forwards with it till a groove is formed in the board. This movement begins comparatively slowly, till the soft wood-dust formed by the friction begins to gather at the further end of the groove. Then the movement becomes faster and faster, till the increased friction results in a minute smouldering spark igniting the

[1] Such tuskers are more valuable if bred at home than if acquired by trade (see p. 242).

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conveyed after they have been performed, and each village or island is thus continually kept informed of the progress of all public rites such as the Maki, Initiation, the erection of a new *ghamal*, and so on, in every other village. On account of their ambassadorial function I will therefore refer to these decorated yams as "Message-yams."

(*b*) *Rom betige.* *Rom* is the ordinary word for "yam," and *betige* means "single" or "alone." This is a single plain yam of any variety, and will be referred to, using a literal translation of the native term, as a "Lone-yam." Such lone-yams form part of the gift of food made to those who attend or assist in any rite.

(*c*) *Ghoal.* This consists of a single large yam or a bunch of yams attached to the end of a pole for carrying, and will therefore be referred to as an "Attached-yam." Such yams are placed in a line on the ground on the occasion of every major rite, one for each village represented among the guests. The number of yams on each pole will be in accordance with the importance of the rite and with the numerical strength of the visiting village.

Gifts never received direct.

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It is important to note, with regard to the presentation of yams, coconuts, dead pigs and all other food-stuffs, and even such personal gifts as mats, that no gift ever passes direct from hand to hand. There is an unwritten law that, though all gifts are minutely recorded in the natives' minds, and though full return gifts must always sooner or later be made, with the exception of certain ritual presentations no gift may be directly made, or even so much as openly acknowledged at the time by the recipient, at least if such gift is made in public. A stranger not aware of this convention who presumes to offer such a gift into a native's hand in public will throw him into the utmost confusion. Nothing will persuade him to touch it, and he will leave it lying on the ground rather than acknowledge its existence. Later, he will, of course, return and pick it up with the knowledge that everyone knows it is his. But the stranger will have been guilty of a gross breach of etiquette. One of my own first experiences in this respect was when, during a lull in some rite, a young man of my acquaintance passed by me with an air of complete absorption in something else, and, without so much as looking at me, absent-mindedly let fall a money-mat at my feet. I thought he had dropped it by mistake, but it turned out to be a gift, and my own return gift was made subsequently in similar fashion.[1]

[1] Compare Bohun Lynch, p. 226: "Gifts should be presented in the most utterly careless manner and received with the most stately indifference. . . . The inner meaning of the manner is that friendship ought to be quite independent of gifts. And gifts must be returned strictly *ad valorem*."